

MINUTES  
CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

-Closed Session-

The Cherokee County Board of Social Services met on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018 at 4:30pm for its regular monthly meeting. The meeting was held in the Conference Room at Cherokee County Department of Social Services. The meeting was called to order by assistant board chair Robert Merrill. Also present were board members James Jallah, Dr. Dan Eichenbaum, and Susan Landis, Business Officer Mandi Amos and Director Cindy Palmer.

At 4:50 pm after a motion by Dr. Eichenbaum and a second by Mr. Merrill the board entered into closed session in accordance to N.C. GS 143-318.11 (a)(1) and Article 29 of Chapter 7B- to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of NC.

Director Palmer has received a *Spoilation Letter/Request to Preserve Evidence* from Attorney David Wijewickrama in regard to a Hogan case in which a "Custody and Visitation Agreement" was initiated by the Department. According to information provided to date, this type of agreement is a violation of Mr. Hogan's civil rights in that it did not allow him due process, and is not a legally binding document. Upon learning about the use and invalidity of these documents, Director Palmer met with all social workers in the CPS Unit and verbally (and later via email) told the social workers to cease using these agreements immediately. Also, each worker was asked to provide Director Palmer with the names of any families/cases in which they were aware of these agreements being used. At this point, it is believed that all of these such agreements that have been completed with families was done with the involvement and approval of DSS Attorney Scott Lindsay.

Director Palmer also advised the board that after lengthy consideration, the decision has been made to relieve Mr. Lindsay of his duties as DSS attorney. Director Palmer will notify Mr. Lindsay tomorrow, January 10<sup>th</sup> of this decision. Director Palmer met with Attorney David Moore and Clay County DSS Director Debbie Mauney last week to discuss a transition plan. Director Palmer has decided to contract with Mr. Moore for the remainder of this fiscal year based on his experience and knowledge of the statutes/guidelines for DSS cases. Neither the DSS Board nor the Commission Board are required to approve this decision since it is a contract rather than a staff attorney.

At 5:10 pm the closed session ended after a motion by Dr. Eichenbaum, and a second by Mr. Jallah.

Respectfully Submitted: Cindy Palmer Approved: Karen Kephaert  
Director Board Chair

**Closed Session,  
Confidential**

**Department of Social Services  
Cherokee County  
Board of Social Services Meeting  
June 12, 2018**

Mr. Moore recommended that a full time attorney and clerical staff member was needed due to the upcoming workload at the DSS. He said it may be difficult to find a local attorney with the needed experience. An interim attorney would be necessary.

The salary range for a permanent director was discussed. Per Human Resources, the salary range is up to \$95K. Dr. Eichenbaum was uncertain if the Board of Commissioners could support a salary higher than what is being paid presently. Some Board members were concerned, that due to the issues presently at the Cherokee County DSS, if a qualified Director could be found at the present salary. Position will be posted at the present salary range.

Motion for approval to advertise for a permanent Director was made, seconded and approved unanimously.

Addendum to the agreement with Vanguard Pro Staffing for extension of Kay Fields contract was approved to last until new interim director is available. Ms. Kephart was authorized to sign for the Board.

Ms. Fields has rewritten the Finance Officer job description. The Assistant Director will be the Program Manager for Child Welfare.

Ms. Fields reviewed problems with NCTRAX, payments to provider, low caseloads and cross training. State is now in control of IV-E funding.

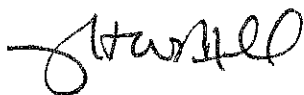
Motion to be made at the July meeting to appoint Benjamin H. Maney as interim director at the end of Kay Fields contract.

Ms. Kephart submitted her resignation to be effective July 13, 2018.

Motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously to move out of closed session at 6:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert W. Merrill



DSS Board meeting, 6-25-18

CLOSED SESSION

Attending: James Jallah, Susan Landis, Dr. Eichenbaum, Robert Merrill, Kay Fields, Darryl Brown, David Moore.

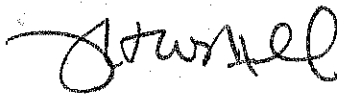
The reason for the closed session is to discuss candidates for the DSS attorney. Mr. Moore's contract expires at the end of the month. Mr. Brown, county attorney, was asked by the county commissioners to contact local attorneys who might have an interest in applying for the position and the expertise to serve in the role as the DSS attorney. Mr. Brown interviewed the interested applicants and had two likely candidates, James Blomeley and Andria Duncan.

Mr. Brown presented the board with the resumes of both candidates and spoke about the experience and integrity of each one. Mr. Brown and Mr. Moore also clarified the procedures used to vet the applicants and how this type of hire is by the county commission, but the board recommends a candidate to them. Dr. Eichenbaum said that based on the information the commission has had, they prefer Ms. Duncan. All members of the board agree that Ms. Duncan is the preferred candidate.

Dr. Eichenbaum asked if the extension of the contract for Ms. Fields to remain in her position as Interim Director needed to be discussed. The board had approved the extension at a previous meeting and her contract now extends to July 23, 2018.

The motion was made and approved to resume the open session.

  
Submitted by Susan Landis



DSS Board minutes

7/10/18

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Black said that all 3 of the new positions had been advertised. The new Assistant Director of Child Welfare had an applicant, but she would need a \$17,000 per year increase to be commensurate with her current salary from another county.

For the Quality Assessment position there have been two viable candidates. The Child Protective Services supervisor position has not had an applicant until yesterday, but not all the information is available yet. All 3 of these positions will need an increase in salary.

We were strongly urged to attend the county commission meeting on Monday.

There have been 5 applicants for permanent Director.

Submitted by Susan Landis

Cherokee County Social Services Board Minutes


August 14, 2018

Executive Session

Present for the executive session were Dr. Eichenbaum, Ms. Lanier, Ms. Snyder, vice Chair Jallah, Chairman Merrill, Harry Maney, Interim director, and Wayne Black, State Division of Social Services Director.

Chairman Merrill led a discussion of on the status of an applicant for the position of director of social services. One member expressed doubts about the applicant's judgement and presentation during the interview. One member recommended continuing to recruit to get a candidate more agreeable to all members of the board, two members were ready to approve the candidate citing the doubtful realities of securing a more qualified candidate. The Board agreed to table the issue until a later meeting.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Harry Maney".

Harry Maney, secretary to the board